

AVOID “THERE IS” “THERE ARE” AND “IT IS”

This resource will show you how to correct double verb errors where one of the verbs is missing the subject.

“There” and “It” used as subjects are called expletive subjects because they have no meaning; they act as false subjects. They can make a sentence wordy and often lead to a double-verb error.

Example of Double-Verb Error

There is too much rain falls in Vancouver.

Subject	Verb	Complement	Prepositional phrase
<i>There</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>too much rain</i>	
<i>?</i>	<i>falls</i>		<i>in Vancouver.</i>

The table above shows that “too much rain” completes the first part of the sentence; it has the job of finishing the first clause. This means that it cannot also do the job of starting a new clause with the verb “falls,” so the verb “falls” is lacking a subject.

Correction

Too much rain falls in Vancouver.

Subject	Verb	Prepositional phrase
<i>Too much rain</i>	<i>falls</i>	<i>in Vancouver.</i>

The best way to fix this error is to avoid, if possible, using “It is” and “There are” in your writing. Below are more examples of this error.

Exercise

Fix the errors below by removing the “there” or “it” phrase that starts each sentence.

1. There are many children die of malnutrition in the Third World.
2. It is Global Warming causes changes in weather patterns.
3. There are many changes have happened in the past ten years.
4. Each year there is a large number of students leave their homes and travel to Canada.